

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BANGKO 08013 092242Z

70 S

ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 DODE-00

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OPR-02 AID-05 SCA-01 NSC-05

PM-03 PRS-01 PA-01 USIE-00 H-02 SCS-03 INRE-00 /057 W

----- 084588

O 031504Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3743

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 8013

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, CB, TH, FR, US

SUBJECT: EVACUATION OF FOREIGNERS FROM CAMBODIA

REF: A. BANGKOK 7653; B. BANGKOK 8012

1. AS REPORTED REF B, FIVE OF THE 10 PEOPLE MENTIONED IN REF A ARRIVED THAILAND AT BORDER TOWN OF ARANYA PRATHET ON MAY 3 AT APPROXIMATELY 12:00 NOON. SIDNEY SCHANBERG, DOUGLAS SAPPER AND JAMES OST ARE AMCITS. MRS. OST NEE VENG LIM HEANG AND MRS. JAMES ROBINET NEE SENG SOVANNA ARE KHMER NATIONALS MARRIED TO AMCITS. ACCORDING SCHANBERG, THE TWO HAD TO BE LITERALLY SMUGGLED OUT OF PHNOM PENH CONCEALED UNDER BAGGAGE BECAUSE OF THEIR KHMER NATIONALITY. THEY HAD NO DIFFICULTY CROSSING THE KHMER-THAI BORDER, HOWEVER.

2. THE NINTH NAME IN REF A IS NOT A PERSON BUT THE LAST THREE LETTERS OF MRS. OST'S MAIDEN NAME.

3. A SELF-IMPOSED NEWS BLACKOUT HAS BEEN AGREED TO BY THE APPROXIMATELY 300 REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED TODAY. THIS BLACKOUT IS TO PROTECT THE REMAINING REFUGEES FROM POSSIBLE KHMER ROUGH RETALIATION FOR ANY UNFAVORABLE REPORTING ABOUT THE KR, CONDITIONS IN CAMBODIA, OR THE DETAILS OF THE REFUGEES' JOURNEY. THE CONTENTS OF THIS CABLE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BANGKO 08013 092242Z

SHOULD THEREFORE BE TREATED WITH GREAT CARE.

4. CONFUSED CONDITIONS AT ARANYA PRATHET DID NOT AFFORD EMBASSY REP A CHANCE TO SPEAK AT LENGTH WITH SCHANBERG OR SAPPER. THESE CONDITIONS WERE PRIMARILY A RESULT OF THE MANY JOURNALISTS ATTEMPTING TO INTERVIEW THE REFUGEES. MR. JAMES OST, HIS WIFE AND MRS. ROBINET TALKED WITH EMBASSY REP DURING DRIVE TO BANGKOK IN EMBASSY CAR.

5. DENIS CAMERON, RICHARD BOYLE (NAME IN REFTEL AS PETER O'BOYLE), LEE RUDAKEWICH AND ALAN ROCKOFF ARE IN THE SECOND GROUP OF REFUGEES REPORTEDLY DUE TO LEAVE PHNOM PENH IN APPROXIMATELY THREE TO SEVEN DAYS. NONE WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON JOHN YIM, HIS WIFE OR BRIAN WALSH.

6. CAMERON, BOYLE, RUDAKEWICH AND ROCKOFF WERE PLACED IN SECOND GROUP BECAUSE KHMER ROUGE AND FRENCH EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN PHNOM PENH WOULD ONLY ALLOW LIMITED NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS TO LEAVE WITH FIRST GROUP.

7. CONDITIONS AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY, PHNOM PENH, WERE CROWDED AND FOOD WAS IN SHORT SUPPLY.

8. THE FIRST REFUGEE CONVOY LEFT PHNOM PENH AT 0600 HOURS AN APRIL 30. THE REFUGEE CONVOY TRAVELED 16 TO 18 HOURS A DAY FOR THREE DAYS, MOST OF THE JOURNEY IN OPEN TRUCKS. THE CONVOY DID NOT RUN OUT OF FUEL BUT DID TAKE AN EXTREMELY CIRCUITOUS ROUTE FROM PHNOM PENH TO ARANYA PRATHET. GROUPS OF KHMER ROUGE SOLDIERS TURNED OUT AT VARIOUS TOWNS AND VILLAGES TO OBSERVE THE CONVOY BUT NO CIVILIANS WERE SEEN, EVEN IN THE FIELDS. THE ARRIVALS REPORT THAT PHNOM PENH ITSELF HAS BEEN COMPLETELY EVACUATED BY THE CIVILIAN POPULATION.

9. THE REFUGEES WERE NOT HARASSED NOR MISTREATED BY THE KHMER ROUGE. FOOD AND WATER WERE IN SHORT SUPPLY, AND THE EXTREME HEAT, RAIN AND POOR ROAD CONDITIONS MADE THE JOURNEY EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR ALL. AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE DIED DURING THE JOURNEY.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BANGKO 08013 092242Z

10. THE RUSSIAN, EAST GERMAN AND OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST BLOC NATIONALS WERE NOT GIVEN PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT IN PHNOM PENH NOR ON THE JOURNEY. THE KHMER ROUGE WERE NOT RECEPTIVE TO STATEMENTS BY THE RUSSIANS ABOUT BEING COMMUNIST COMRADES IN ARMS. THE RUSSIANS DID HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL SUPPLY OF FOOD ON THE JOURNEY, INCLUDING VODKA AND CAVIAR WHICH THEY REFUSED TO SHARE WITH THE OTHER REFUGEES. APPARENTLY SEVERAL UGLY

INCIDENTS OCCURRED ON THE JOURNEY BETWEEN THE RUSSIANS AND OTHER NATIONALITIES BUT NO ONE WOULD PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE INCIDENTS.

11. THOSE IN THE FRENCH EMBASSY WERE PERMITTED TO EMERGE TO MAKE PURCHASES DURING THEIR STAY THERE. OST AND SAPPER REPORT THAT THE KHMER ROUGE HAVE DECIDED THAT THE REESTABLISHMENT OF CAMBODIA'S AGRICULTURE IS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY. NON-AGRICULTURAL VEHICLES HAVE BEEN DISABLED TO CONSERVE FUEL AND PARTS. THE ADMINISTRATION OF CITIES AND TOWNS IS NOT A PROBLEM BECAUSE ALL CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE COUNTRYSIDE. ALL PRIVATE PROPERTY HAS BEEN EXPROPRIATED.

12. THE KHMER ROUGE, ACCORDING TO OST AND SAPPER, DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE THE TECHNICAL SKILLS REQUIRED TO OPERATE A MODERN CITY. THEY DID NOT RESTORE ELECTRIC POWER IN PHNOM PENH AND DID NOT KNOW HOW TO RUN THE WATER WORKS. AT ONEPOINT THEY ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE IN MAINTAINING A FUNCTIONING WATER WORKS. A FRENCH ENGINEER, APPARENTLY OUT OF THE ORIGINAL DESIGNERS, OFFERED HIS ASSISTANCE, BUT AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF DELIBERATION THE KHMER ROUGE INDICATED HIS ASSISTANCE WAS NOT WANTED.

13. ALL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND THE REFUGEES' JOURNEY WAS GOTTEN IN CONVERSATIONS WITH SCHANBERG, SAPPER AND OST, THE MAJORITY FROM OST. THEIR VIEW OF THE SITUATION INSIDE CAMBODIA WAS AT BEST EXTREMELY LIMITED AND THEIR VIEWS OF THE JOURNEY CERTAINLY COLORED BY THE EMOTIONAL STRAIN OF THE LAST WEEK.

14 EMBASSY REP WILL RETURN TO ARANYA PRATHET ABOUT MAY 6 OR 7 TO MEET SECOND CONVOY.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 BANGKO 08013 092242Z

MASTER

NOTE: EXDIS CAPTION DELETED AND DOWNGRADED TO LOU PER BANGKOK 8461 AND MR. CAMPBELL S/S-O

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, EVACUATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO08013
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750156-0250
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750582/aaaacxea.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ITF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 BANGKOK 7653, 75 BANGKOK 8012
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <10 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EVACUATION OF FOREIGNERS FROM CAMBODIA
TAGS: PFOR, CASC, CB, TH, FR, US, (SCHANBERG, SIDNEY), (SAPPER, DOUGLAS), (OST, JAMES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006